2010 Edition

EAPA STANDARDS
AND
PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES
FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

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INTRODUCTION

A.   PURPOSE

The purpose of these *Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs* is to:

- Define employee assistance programs and the EA profession;

- Promote the highest quality employee assistance programs;

- Provide the foundation for program evaluation and accreditation;

- Describe the scope of employee assistance services;

- Educate purchasers of employee assistance services;

- Operationalize program standards, guidelines and definitions; and

- Serve the needs of the EAPA membership and other professionals.

This document identifies a coordinated set of policies, procedures, and activities. When designing its EAP, each organization applies these standards and professional guidelines based on its own unique mission, operation and culture.

B.   ORGANIZATION

The *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs* are organized in the following format:

STANDARD:
  The Standards are the fundamental elements required for an effective employee assistance program. A comprehensive EAP will meet all the standards described in this document.

INTENT:
  The Intent describes the role each standard plays in an effective EAP.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  Essential components must be present for an EAP to meet the standard.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
  Recommended components are desirable in an EAP but are not necessary to meet the standard.

EXAMPLES:

Examples, when included, illustrate one or more specific applications of the standard or one of its essential or recommended components. Examples are not requirements, nor are they intended to represent all acceptable approaches to meeting a standard.

C. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The *Standards for Employee Alcoholism and/or Assistance Programs* were originally drafted in 1981 by a joint committee representing these national groups:

- The Association of Labor/Management Administrators and Consultants on Alcoholism (ALMACA)

- The National Council on Alcoholism (NCA)

- The Occupational Program Consultants Association (OPCA)

- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)

- The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

In 1981, approximately 2,800 EA professionals representing 8,000 programs belonged to ALMACA. By 1991, ALMACA had become the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), the number of individuals providing employee assistance services had increased substantially to an estimated 20,000, and the EAPA membership had grown to more than 7,000 professionals and 80 chapters.

In 1988, EAPA recognized the need for more detailed standards reflecting advancements in the employee assistance profession. EAPA appointed a Program Standards Committee to develop revised program standards. The Committee began a five part development process.

Part One, *EAPA Standards for Employee Assistance Programs*, published in 1990, set forth specific program standards, each of which was accompanied by a statement of intent. These program standards identified the core ingredients of employee assistance programs. They were organized into six fundamental areas:

1. Design

2. Evaluation

3. Implementation

4. Management and Administration

5. Direct Services

6. Linkages

Part Two, *EAPA Standards for Employee Assistance Programs, Part II: Professional Guidelines*, originally published in 1992, incorporated the 1990 Standards and added essential and recommended components. EAPA recognized the variability among

programs, organizations, and national structures. These guidelines focused on a U.S. service delivery model.

Part Three was the publication of the *EAPA Glossary of Terms* in 1994. Part Four, also published in 1994, was the development of the *EAPA Program Self Evaluation Tool*

Part Five was the 1996 publication of the *EAPA Guidelines for International EAPs,* developed by representatives of 14 countries. The work team for this project was representative of EAPA's worldwide membership and marked the first time that an international group had gathered to formulate employee assistance guidelines which are applicable in a variety of international cultures and settings.

In 1996, the EAPA Standards Committee undertook a comprehensive review and revision of the standards and professional guidelines. That review culminated in the publication, in 1998, of an updated *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs*, which reflected important changes in the delivery of employee assistance services and in the legal and regulatory requirements affecting the workplace.

D. CURRENT STANDARDS

This latest version of the *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs* begins with the definition of an employee assistance program and a statement of the employee assistance "core technology." The standards, themselves, are organized into seven major sections:

I.   Program Design
II.   Management & Administration
III.   Confidentiality & Regulatory Impact on Protective Rights
IV.   Employee Assistance Program Direct Services
V.   Drug Free Workplace & Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) Services
VI.   Strategic Partnerships
VII.   Evaluation

It is important to note several word usage conventions that have been used throughout this document to make it more readable.

"*Organization*" refers to the organization (e.g. company, union, professional firm, or other type of organization) whose employees or members are eligible for the EAP services. It does <u>not</u> refer to a vendor or provider organization.

"*Employee*" refers to the employees or members of an organization who are eligible for EAP services.

"*Leadership"* means supervisors, managers, executives, union representatives and officials, and others with leadership responsibilities within the organization.

This document reflects the combined efforts of many dedicated EA professionals. The members of the EAPA Standards Task Force (acknowledged and listed in the Appendix, page 39) devoted hours of diligent effort to review the previous documents

and draft significant new language. EAPA Chapters, individual members, and members of EAPA's Board of Directors reviewed the drafts and made numerous valuable suggestions. Thank you to all of them for their significant contribution to the employee assistance profession.

DEFINITIONS OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) and EAP CORE TECHNOLOGY

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) serve organizations and their employees in multiple ways, ranging from consultation at the strategic level about issues with organization-wide implications to individual assistance to employees and family members experiencing personal difficulties. As workplace programs, the structure and operation of each EAP varies with the structure, functioning, and needs of the organization(s) it serves.

In general, an EAP is a set of professional services specifically designed
- to improve and/or maintain the productivity and healthy functioning of the workplace and to address a work organization's particular business needs
- through the application of specialized knowledge and expertise about human behavior and mental health.

More specifically, an EAP is a workplace program designed to assist: (1) work organizations in addressing productivity issues, and (2) "employee clients" in identifying and resolving personal concerns, including health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal issues that may affect job performance.

"Employee assistance program core technology" or "EAP core technology" represents the essential components of the employee assistance (EA) profession. These components combine to create a unique approach to addressing work-organization productivity issues and "employee client" personal concerns affecting job performance. EAP core technology is:

(1) Consultation with, training of, and assistance to work organization leadership (managers, supervisors, and union officials) seeking to manage troubled employees, enhance the work environment, and improve employee job performance;

(2) Active promotion of the availability of EA services to employees, their family members, and the work organization.

(3) Confidential and timely problem identification/assessment services for employee clients with personal concerns that may affect job performance;

(4) Use of constructive confrontation, motivation, and short-term intervention with employee clients to address problems that affect job performance;

(5) Referral of employee clients for diagnosis, treatment, and assistance, as well as case monitoring and follow-up services;

(6) Assisting work organizations in establishing and maintaining effective relations with treatment and other service providers, and in managing provider contracts;

(7) Consultation to work organizations to encourage availability of and employee access to health benefits covering medical and behavioral problems including, but not limited to, alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental and emotional disorders; and

(8) Evaluation of the effects of EA services on work organizations and individual job performance.

STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

I. PROGRAM DESIGN

A. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STANDARD:
Program design shall be based on an assessment of organization and employee needs.

INTENT:
The assessment is intended to help determine the most appropriate methods and models of providing EAP services given the unique characteristics of the organization's structure and culture.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. Program design must take into account organization issues, including:

   a. Type of organization
   b. Types of jobs/work products
   c. Organizational mission
   d. Size and demographic makeup of workforce, including racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural diversity
   e. Number and dispersion of work sites, including remote and teleworking employees
   f. Collective bargaining agreements

2. Program design must take into account the needs of the organization's employees and others eligible for services.

3. Program design must take into account the needs and goals of the organization's leadership.

4. Program design must be consistent with other policies of the organization which, in some cases, may require modification.

5. The assessment process must be continuous so that program design evolves to meet changing needs.

B. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

STANDARD:
The EAP shall be designed with an understanding of the regulatory and legislative implications relevant to the organization.

INTENT:
The design of an EAP has implications for legal requirements and obligations, both on the part of the EAP and the organization. The design needs to be thoughtful in order to avoid unexpected financial or other liability.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. A program, whether providing services within a single state or multiple states, must review, consider, and adhere to all relevant state and federal laws and regulatory practices regarding the delivery of employee assistance services and the operation and/or licensing of the program.

EXAMPLES:
• A program that provides short-term problem resolution is likely to be defined as an ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974) program.

• A company based in Ohio has several employees in California. EA services provided to those employees must be in compliance with California's Knox-Keene legislation.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
1. New legislation and regulations should be reviewed regularly to determine if they have implications for the design and operation of the EAP.

C. ADVISORY FUNCTION

STANDARD:
There shall be an advisory process within the organization which provides for the involvement of representatives of all key segments of the workforce.

INTENT:
The advisory process is intended to assure program understanding, acceptance, and support throughout the organization.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The advisory process must include representation from:

a.   The organization's leadership

b.   Line employees

c.   Key departments, peer groups, or other segments of the organization

d.   Union leadership in companies with labor unions

2. The advisory process must reflect the gender, ethnic and cultural diversity of the employee population.

3. Those who participate in the advisory process must be educated in the scope, purpose and operation of the EAP so that they are able to communicate this

information effectively to others in the organization. There must be a mechanism to ensure that this happens.

4. The advisory process must provide advice and suggestions regarding:

    a. EAP goals and objectives, design, development, implementation, planning, promotion, operations and evaluation

    b. Utilization of EAP services

    c. EAP confidentiality issues and limits of confidentiality

    d. How to take into account the unique characteristics of the organization and its employees

5. The advisory process must advocate for the allocation of sufficient resources to enable the EAP to meet its goals and objectives.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENT
1. Where it is not inconsistent with the organization's culture, the advisory process should be accomplished by a formally identified advisory committee.

D. SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

STANDARD:
Employee assistance program services shall be provided through a distinct, identifiable delivery system.

INTENT:
An EAP delivery system that is distinct from other organizational processes and functions, such as the department of human resources, helps to assure that EAP service delivery does not occur through inappropriate organizational channels.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The service delivery system must reflect the unique needs of the organization and its employees.

    EXAMPLES:
    • A large corporation uses an internal service delivery system where EAP services are provided by EA professionals employed by the organization

    • A large multi-site corporation uses an internal service delivery system at its headquarters but contracts with local EA providers at each of its other locations

    • A medium-sized corporation contracts with an EAP firm to provide services

    • A union provides EA services for its members who work for various employers

- A unionized employer uses a combination of a company-based and union-based service delivery system, as negotiated in the collective bargaining agreement

- Several small organizations form a consortium to contract for EA services from an EAP firm

- A medium-sized company contracts with a qualified provider to deliver both EA services and managed behavioral health care services which are integrated into a seamless service delivery system

2. The service delivery system must facilitate equal access to services by all segments of the organization.

3. The service delivery system must be designed to complement and eliminate duplication of services with related programs such as managed behavioral health care.

4. The service delivery system must be allocated sufficient resources to allow the EAP to meet its goals and objectives and the essential components of the EAPA program standards.

5. Organizations using external service delivery systems must identify at least one organization representative as liaison to the external provider.

   a. The EAP liaison function should be an explicitly defined element of the representative's position description.

   b. The EAP liaison monitors EA program performance, including but not limited to, reviewing utilization data, identifying EAP-related training and education needs within the organization and encouraging leadership to utilize EAP services to assist with productivity issues and resolution of employee personal concerns that may affect job performance.

E. ADDITIONAL SERVICES

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall remain alert for emerging needs and may add new services when they are consistent with and complementary to the employee assistance program (EAP) core technology.

INTENT:
EA professionals and programs are most useful to organizations and their employees when they are proactive in identifying and responding to emerging needs. Services to meet these needs may be incorporated into the EAP as long as they do not reduce the effectiveness or perceived neutrality of the EA professional and program. The EA professional may assist in the design and location of services for which a need has been identified but which are better housed outside of the EAP.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENT:

1. When considering the addition of any new services, the EAP must first determine that the new services are consistent with and will not damage the core EAP functions, goals, and objectives.

    EXAMPLES:
    - Before adding the Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) role to an existing EAP, the EAP advisory committee, EAP staff and organization leadership analyze and attempt to predict the impact that the new role will have on both supervisory and self referrals, employee perception of the EA professional and/or program, and the resources of the EAP. If there are no predicted negative effects, the new role is added. If the new role might damage the perception of the EAP as a safe place to seek help, the EA professional can arrange for the SAP role to be performed by someone who is not part of the EAP.

    - After careful analysis, an EAP *adds* child and elder care information and referral services, *supports* the organization's disability management efforts, and *advises* on safety related issues.

2. In cases where organizational policies are defined by joint labor-management agreements, the EAP must determine that any new EA services are consistent with the joint agreement.

3. The EAP must remain alert and respond appropriately to external events and situations that might affect the workplace.

    EXAMPLES:
    - In order to prepare for a possible flu pandemic, the EAP participates in the organization's strategic planning for business continuity.

    - The EAP mobilizes additional resources to assist employees who are being laid off because of difficult economic conditions.

F. ORGANIZATION EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT

STANDARD:
The organization shall adopt a written employee assistance program policy which defines the employee assistance program's relationship to the organization, describes the program as a confidential resource, and states the scope and limitations of the program's services.

INTENT:
The intent of a written policy statement is to assure understanding of the EAP and consistency of its application throughout the organization, and to provide a clear definition of its role and function. The policy statement should not be confused with operating procedures or contractual agreements. Because operating procedures may need to be adjusted in response to emerging needs, they should not be incorporated into a policy document that may be difficult to modify.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. Program implementation must be preceded by the development of a policy statement clearly communicating the organization's rationale for instituting an EAP, the protections inherent in the EAP, and the areas of EAP operations. The policy statement must include at least the following concepts:

   a. The organization recognizes that mentally and physically healthy employees are an organizational asset and that the availability of appropriate EAP services is beneficial to both labor and management.

   b. Alcohol and other drug abuse, emotional, marital, family and other related problems may affect job performance, health, and quality of life. Such problems are the legitimate concern of the organization when they impact performance, productivity, or safety.

   c. Employees may voluntarily seek EAP assistance, or they may be referred to the EAP through constructive confrontation. Job security will not be jeopardized as a consequence of seeking or using EAP services, except where mandated by law. However, employees who use an EAP are expected to adhere to the job performance requirements of the organization.

   d. All EAP client records will be kept confidential and will not be made part of any other record of the organization, including employee human resource files. Legal and policy-based limits of confidentiality must be clearly delineated.

2. The policy must delineate the EAP related roles, responsibilities and rights of the organization, its leadership, and its employees.

3. The EAP policy must be consistent with any other pertinent organization policies, such as those addressing disciplinary actions, Workers Compensation and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

G. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STANDARD:

An implementation plan shall outline the actions needed to establish a fully functioning employee assistance program and set forth a time line for their completion.

INTENT:

An implementation plan is needed to assure that all of the essential components outlined in the Standards and Professional Guidelines are addressed and to articulate the responsibilities of the organization and the EAP. It should include realistic objectives and criteria for ongoing evaluation and, if necessary, program modification. Successful implementation encourages "ownership" by all sectors of the workforce. Special provisions may be needed for program implementation in work sites geographically distant from the organization's headquarters.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The implementation plan must define the responsibilities of all parties in the implementation process.

2. The implementation plan must address all of the essential components outlined in the Standards and Professional Guidelines, including an extensive and continual promotional, informational, and education strategy.

II. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A. EAP ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

STANDARD:
Written procedures for employee assistance program administration and operation shall be developed based on organization needs, program objectives, and the organization's employee assistance program policy statement.

INTENT:
Clearly defined written procedures help assure consistent and effective delivery of services.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP procedures must describe all important program processes, such as:

    a. The access routes to obtain EAP services

    b. The problem identification/assessment, referral, and short-term problem resolution processes

    c. EAP participation in treatment planning, liaison with treatment providers, termination of care, follow-up, monitoring, and reports of non-compliance

    d. EAP participation in the disciplinary process, if any, and procedures for supervisory referrals

    e. EAP interaction and communication with leadership

    f. Delivery of organizational services, such as training, consulting, and critical incident response.

2. The EAP procedures must include position descriptions which clarify roles, define responsibilities and tasks to be performed and summarize the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge required.

3. Procedures must clearly delineate the scope of work for administrative and operating duties, including both qualitative and quantitative aspects (what, when, why, and how, activities are performed as well as how much of each activity is expected.)

4. Procedures must be reviewed and updated periodically.

EXAMPLES:

- An organization's EAP procedure requires that, at every step of the disciplinary process, a supervisor informs the employee of the EAP, provides the EAP's phone number, and documents that this discussion occurred.

- An organization's EAP procedures delineate the role and interaction of the EAP in all drug-testing programs.

- An organization's EAP procedures define the respective responsibilities and relationship between the EAP and any managed care functions.

B. STAFFING LEVELS

STANDARD:
An adequate number of employee assistance professionals shall be available to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the employee assistance program.

INTENT:
EAP staffing patterns, and the number of professionals, vary according to the type of program and the scope of services provided. Whether the EAP is internal or delivered by external contractors, the number and qualifications of EAP professionals should match program needs.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The following factors must be considered when determining the necessary staffing level for an EAP:

   a. Size and distribution of the workforce

   b. Diversity of the employee population

   c. Type and structure of insurance and other benefits offered by the organization

   d. Scope and design of the EAP

   e. Consideration of the potential for unique events, such as catastrophes, major downsizing, plant closings, or other critical incidents, which may impact the organization

C. STAFF AND AFFILIATE CRITERIA

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall retain professionals qualified to perform their duties.

INTENT:
Professional competence is critical to program success. Depending upon the specific services provided, various levels of experience, education, certification, credentialing and licensure may be required. EA professionals are expected to hold CEAP® certification, which indicates mastery of the EA body of knowledge. Individual EA professionals are responsible for knowing and recognizing the limitations of their competence and making certain that all work is performed within those limitations. Those individuals who are called upon to provide services for which they are not yet fully trained and experienced should be supervised by a person who is qualified in those areas.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. All individuals, including affiliates, who provide EA services, must have training in and understanding of EAP practice, alcohol and other drug problems, mental health issues, human resource and labor relations issues, and organizational dynamics.

2. All individuals supervising or coordinating EA services must hold the CEAP® certification or demonstrate progress toward CEAP® certification.

3. The EAP must encourage and facilitate affiliates and other individuals providing EA services to hold the CEAP® certification or demonstrate progress toward CEAP® certification.

4. The immediate supervisor of every EA professional must conduct a periodic performance evaluation based upon established individual and program goals and objectives.

5. The EAP must establish referral procedures and return to work guidelines for impaired EA professionals.

   EXAMPLE:
   - An EAP Director confronts an EA professional on documented job problems, takes appropriate job action, and refers the professional to an outside EAP for problem identification/assessment, referral, and follow-up.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
1. All other individuals, including affiliates, who are providing EA services and are not currently CEAPs, should demonstrate progress toward such qualification.

D. AFFILIATE MANAGEMENT

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall assure that all affiliates understand and accept the policies, procedures and responsibilities associated with their role in the employee assistance program.

INTENT:
Affiliate providers often do not identify themselves as employee assistance professionals, but rather as therapists. They may be trained to perform only a portion of EAP services. Affiliates should be utilized only in roles for which they are qualified.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must assure that all affiliates understand and accept the polices, procedures, and responsibilities associated with their role in the EAP.

E. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CASE CONSULTATION/SUPERVISION

STANDARD:
Employee assistance professionals who provide client services to individuals shall receive case consultation/supervision.

INTENT:
Whether providing problem identification/assessment, motivational interviewing, short-term problem resolution, individual consultations with leadership, or any other client service, EA professionals exert a potentially profound effect on their clients. Case consultation and supervision help protect the client's interests, assure the quality of client services, and improve the EA professional's skills.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. Consultation in accordance with the needs of the EAP staff or affiliates must be provided by a person or group who is familiar with the parameters of the EAP.

> EXAMPLES:
> * Several EA professionals agree to meet monthly to discuss case management.
>
>   1. Several EA professionals get together after each EAPA chapter meeting to discuss case management.
>
> * An EAP brings in a contract clinician familiar with the EAP to provide weekly group clinical supervision for the staff.

2. Access to consultation from legal counsel must be available to the EAP.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
1. Consultation should be provided at least monthly by a CEAP in accordance with the needs of the EAP staff or affiliates.

2. Individuals with administrative EAP responsibilities should have access to consultation whenever possible.

3. Consultation from outside the EAP should be provided as needed.

F. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall require employee assistance professionals to maintain and upgrade their professional knowledge and skills, and shall support their efforts to do so.

INTENT:
Participation in professional development through EAPA enhances the knowledge and skills of EA professionals and helps assure that they are aware of new developments in EAP service delivery, evolving health care delivery systems, and human resource and performance management techniques. Participation also provides professional support and all the benefits of networking with other EA professionals.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must encourage all EA professionals to work toward, attain, and maintain the CEAP® credential.

2. The EAP must encourage all EA professionals to belong to and participate actively in EAPA.

   EXAMPLES:
   - An EA professional develops valuable professional and personal relationships through regular attendance at EAPA chapter meetings.

   - EA professionals find that attendance at the World EAP Conference reduces feelings of professional isolation and energizes them for their jobs and profession.

   - An EA professional keeps up with the latest trends in EAP services and operations and learns critical information for her job by participating in EAPA chapter meetings and webinars.

3. The EAP must encourage EA professionals to attend EAP-related professional conferences and training programs.

4. The EAP must encourage EA professionals to maintain contact and interaction with other EA professionals.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP should provide financial support for participation in EAPA and other EA professional development activities when feasible.

2. The EAP should encourage EA professionals to become involved in professional organizations for personnel working in the following disciplines: human resources, risk management, labor relations, training and organizational development, benefits, and occupational health and safety.

    EXAMPLES:
    - An EA professional routinely reads publications of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

    - An EA professional hosts a human resources manager at an EAPA chapter meeting; the human resources manager hosts the EA professional at a SHRM meeting.

G. RECORD KEEPING

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall create and maintain confidential client records that are consistent with the employee assistance program service delivery system, organization policies, program procedures, and in accordance with applicable ethical and legal requirements.

INTENT:
EAP client records facilitate problem identification, action planning, service consistency, continuity of care, and program evaluation. Confidential records facilitate individual and organizational trust in program services.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must maintain retrievable documentation of all direct services and recommendations.

2. EAP records must be maintained in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

3. EAP records must be maintained for the minimum period of time required by law or organization policy.

4. The storage, transfer and destruction of records must be handled in a manner to assure confidentiality.

5. Every effort must be made by the EAP to prevent the involvement of EAP records in arbitration, litigation, or any other dispute

6. EAP client records must be kept in a secure location and be available only to authorized EAP personnel. Client records and rooms where client records are stored must be locked, and computerized records must be maintained in a secure environment and separated from other data systems and all other records.

EXAMPLES:
- Paper EAP client records are kept in a locked file cabinet in secure EAP offices.

- Computerized client records are protected by being stored on a stand-alone computer with limited password access.

- Computerized client records are protected by being stored on data systems that are partitioned and firewall protected from other company data systems.

7. The EAP must make every effort to assure the confidentiality of information sent by mail, fax, modem, E-mail, or other electronic communication technology. A limit of disclosure statement must be included in all communications.

EXAMPLES:
- All email and fax transmissions include the statement: "Documents accompanying this transmission contain confidential and legally privileged information belonging to the sender. The information is intended for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you have received this in error and are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking of any action in reliance on the contents is strictly prohibited. Please notify our office immediately of any transmission error."

- An EAP that contracts with a specialty vendor for data warehouse services maintains responsibility for protection of client record confidentiality.

8. Ownership of EAP records must be clearly delineated through policy or contract language.

9. The content of EAP records must be consistent with the scope of the service delivery system.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP should conduct periodic client record audits to ensure adequate documentation of service delivery and outcome.

H. RISK MANAGEMENT

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall take all reasonable precautions to limit its risk for exposure to liability.

INTENT:
An EAP is best able to accomplish its goals when it adheres to professional standards and operates in such a way that its exposure to liability is limited.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. All EAPs and EA professionals must have adequate professional and other appropriate liability coverage.

2. The EAP must establish procedures necessary to respond to legal challenges.

    EXAMPLE:
- An EAP manager consults with legal counsel before responding to a subpoena of client records.

3. The EAP must comply with applicable government regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Workers Compensation laws, and Equal Employment Opportunity regulations.

4. All EA personnel must operate within the scope of their training and/or licensure or certification.

5. EAP documents such as release of information forms, statements of understanding, and permission for treatment must be standardized and consistently used.

I. ETHICS

STANDARD:
    The employee assistance program shall require that all employee assistance personnel adhere to the *EAPA Code of Ethics*.

INTENT:
    Adherence to the EAPA Code of Ethics helps assure that programs and professionals are responsible for the consequences of their actions and act in a professional manner, thereby protecting the consumer, the community, the professional and the profession.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must assure that all program personnel have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the EAPA Code of Ethics.

2. The EAP must assure that all program personnel who are CEAPs have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the EACC Code of Professional Conduct.

    EXAMPLE:
- The EAP requires all CEAPs to sign a written acknowledgment that they have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the EACC Code of Professional Conduct.

    NOTE: The EAPA Code of Ethics and the EACC Code of Professional Conduct are provided in the appendix to these Standards.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY AND REGULATORY IMPACT ON PROTECTIVE RIGHTS

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall prepare and implement a written policy of confidentiality that reflects applicable laws, professional standards and ethics, and that clearly elucidates all limits of confidentiality.

INTENT:
Program success and credibility hinge on confidence by all parties that the EAP respects their privacy and will appropriately protect the information that they disclose.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must maintain the confidentiality of clients and fully disclose conditions that limit confidentiality such as company policies, statutes, regulations, or court orders.

    EXAMPLES:
    - When designing an EAP, the EAP and the organization's leadership determine the implications for confidentiality of:
        a) State mandated reporting

        b) Labor agreements

        c) Danger to others

        d) Company policies

        e) Drug testing regulations

        f) Applicability of regulations (e.g., federal regulation, 42CFR does not apply to EAPs that are not directly federally funded)

    - An EAP reports utilization trends to the organization using aggregate data that does not identify individuals. In cases where particular data categories might allow individuals to be identified, the EAP does not report those categories.

    - The EAP policy limits the release of information following an employee claim, such as Workers Compensation or ADA, unless the employee requests the release in writing.

    - An EA professional requires proper written consent before responding to a request for information from a non-custodial parent about her child who is an EA client.

    - An EA professional who is serving as a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) clearly explains the differences in confidentiality as they apply to each role.

2. The confidentiality policy must be regularly evaluated to ensure continuing compliance with changing requirements.

3. The EAP must explain EAP confidentiality to all eligible recipients and organization leadership during EAP promotional activities and through written materials.

4.   The EAP must request that all clients who are seen in person by the EAP read and sign a "statement of understanding" that describes limits to confidentiality. Clients whose only contact with the EAP is by phone must be told of the limits of confidentiality and this must be documented in the client's EAP record.

5.   The EAP must inform clients when their confidentiality or other protective rights are impacted by statute or regulations or organization policy.

   EXAMPLE:
   - An EA professional operating as a Substance Abuse Professional informs an employee who has tested positive for Department of Transportation prohibited drugs, that she may not be covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Family Medical Leave Act.

6. The EAP must clearly state in policy and procedure what, if any, information organization leadership will receive from the EAP following a referral to the EAP based upon declining job performance.

7. The actual EAP offices must be located and designed so as to protect client privacy.

8. The EAP must regularly instruct all EA personnel, including affiliates, in techniques for protecting confidential information.

9. The EAP must operate in compliance with statutes and regulations pertaining to the protection of personal information and EAP confidentiality.

10. Information obtained through the EAP's consultative role in the organization, such as supervisory or critical incident response consultation, must be protected and shared only on a limited and clearly defined "need to know" basis.

11. The organization's proprietary information must be protected and treated with professional discretion and integrity.

12. The EAP must advise the organization of situations where EAP communications, even if released with proper authorization, may be inappropriate and/or detrimental to the EAP client or program.

   EXAMPLES:

   - An organization seeks to determine from the EAP, with employee authorization, whether an employee is eligible for protection under the Americans with Disability Act for a mental disability. The EA professional suggests that the organization seek information from the employee or through an independent medical/psychiatric evaluation.

   - An organization asks the EA professional to testify in an arbitration or legal proceeding. The EA professional discusses the potential impact of such testimony on employee perception of EAP neutrality.

IV. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DIRECT SERVICES

NOTE: Employee assistance programs deliver direct services to three target groups:

   a) *Employees and eligible family/household members*

   b) *Organization leadership*

   c) *The organization as a whole*

A. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION/ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall identify and/or assess problems of the client, develop an appropriate plan of action, and when necessary, recommend or refer the client to an appropriate resource for problem resolution.

INTENT:
The intent is to match the client and the identified problem to the appropriate type and level of service. Problem identification and /or assessment and appropriate referral results in problem resolution, improved job performance and enhanced employee well-being

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must utilize problem identification and/or assessments to identify, document and evaluate the client's unique strengths, weaknesses, problems and needs and to develop an appropriate action plan. Basic elements of an assessment include:

a. Client statement of presenting problems	g. Alcohol and drug use/abuse history
b. Level of risk to self and others	h. Relevant health concerns
c. Any precipitating events	i. Relevant family history
d. Impact on job performance	j. Observed mental / emotional state
e. Impact on other life activities	k. Corroborating data
f. Past history of the issue, including attempts at resolution	l. Initial impression

2. The EAP must determine referral recommendations and selection of resources based on the unique needs and circumstances of the client as revealed in the problem identification/assessment process and on the availability of and access to services.

3. The EAP must refer the client to appropriate services when it is determined that needed assistance is beyond the scope or guidelines of the EAP.

EXAMPLE:
- An EA professional in a program offering a maximum of five sessions determines in the first session that the client requires treatment at a level beyond the scope of the EAP. The appropriate treatment referral is made at that time.

4. The EAP must maintain current awareness and knowledge of available referral resources.

   EXAMPLE:
   - An EAP maintains a list of clinicians and treatment programs that accept insurance reimbursements as well as a listing of low fee community based resources that are available to seasonal and temporary workers.

5. The EAP must act as a client advocate to assure access to the appropriate type and level care.

   EXAMPLE:
   - An external EA professional contacts a primary care physician to alert her to an emergency situation.

   - An EA professional contacts an intensive outpatient treatment resource to coordinate admission and care.

6. The EAP must utilize outside expertise, when needed, to assist with assessments and referrals.

   EXAMPLE:
   - A union peer counselor refers a worker's son to a licensed psychologist for specialized testing and evaluation of a suspected learning disability.

B. CRISIS INTERVENTION

STANDARD:
   The employee assistance program shall offer responsive crisis intervention services to employees, eligible family members, and the organization.

INTENT:
   The EAP must be prepared to respond to emergencies and urgent situations in a timely fashion to ameliorate or minimize the impact of the crisis on the organization and employees.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must establish procedures for 24-hour availability of crisis intervention services and response by qualified professionals.

   EXAMPLE:
   - The EAP has a 24-hour a day, 7 day a week, telephone answering system with an on-call professional available at all times.

- The EAP has a 24-hour a day, 7 day a week, monitored online access system with an on-call professional available at all times.

2. The EAP must provide for the availability of critical incident response services to the organization and its employees.

   EXAMPLE:
   - An EAP conducts psychological first aid immediately following a fatal worksite accident and a subsequent debriefing process for affected employees and managers.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS
1. The EAP should consult with and train organization leadership in advance regarding how to handle crisis situations in the workplace, including how to access the EAP.

2. The EAP should be an integral component of the organization's overall emergency response plan.

C. SHORT-TERM PROBLEM RESOLUTION

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall establish procedures to determine when to provide short-term problem resolution services, and when to make a referral to professional and/or community resources.

INTENT:
The consistency of EAP services is enhanced when procedures are in place to discriminate between those problems which may respond to short-term problem resolution and those which require referral to an outside resource.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. Based upon the parameters of the EAP service delivery system, organization policy, and the qualifications of EAP personnel, the EAP must develop a protocol to distinguish between cases that are appropriate for short-term problem resolution and cases that should be referred to outside resources.

2. The EAP must require EA professionals to develop a written individualized plan of action that establishes mutually agreed upon goals and time frames whenever short-term problem resolution services are provided.

   EXAMPLES:
   - A supervisor has difficulty handling conflict among his work group. The EA professional meets with the supervisor for several sessions to provide management coaching.

   - An employee who is having difficulty with child rearing issues receives support and education during several sessions with an EA peer counselor.

3. When the EA professional determines that referral is appropriate, he or she must provide motivational counseling and support to encourage the client's acceptance and follow through with referral recommendations.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An employee describes a long history of participation in dysfunctional family systems. The EAP protocol suggests that short-term problem resolution will not be appropriate. The employee is referred to an outside clinician.

D. MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

STANDARD:
   The employee assistance program shall establish procedures to assure appropriate follow-up and/or monitoring of client progress.

INTENT:
   The EAP is in a unique position to monitor and review the progress of referrals and adherence to accepted standards of practice. Providing follow-up services demonstrates a commitment to the well-being of EAP clients and the organization.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. For clients referred to treatment resources, the EAP must maintain appropriate contact with the client and resource to support the goals and objectives of the treatment plan.

    EXAMPLES:
    - An EA professional attends a case conference at a treatment facility after the initial phase of treatment to participate in discharge planning.

    - An EA professional calls a client to discuss her progress and satisfaction with the treatment to date.

    - An EA professional coordinates and participates, as appropriate, in "back to work" meetings with each employee who has missed work due to residential treatment.

2. When a client is referred to the EAP based upon declining job performance, the EAP must maintain a continuing dialogue with the referring party throughout the EAP service delivery process, subject to confidentiality constraints.

    EXAMPLES:
    - An EA professional contacts an employee's union representative to discuss support of the employee upon his return from treatment.

    - The EAP establishes a policy to follow up with referring supervisors to obtain feedback on current performance, six months after each job performance-based referral.

3. The EAP must establish parameters for case management and follow-up of EAP clients

4. The EAP must document all monitoring and follow-up activities in client's EAP records.

E. TRAINING OF ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

STANDARD:
  The employee assistance program shall provide training for organization leadership to communicate program purpose and procedures and to explain their role in the program.

INTENT:
  The intent of training is to provide role clarification and skill in early problem recognition, timely intervention, and appropriate referral to the EAP.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  1. The EAP must provide ongoing training of organization leadership which includes:

     a. Purpose of the EAP: The impact of employee problems on job performance; the management of troubled employees.

     b. Leadership's role in the EAP: The recognition of an employee's need for assistance; methods of referral to the EAP; barriers to confrontation and referral.

     c. Interrelationship of the EAP with other organization functions: personnel actions; confidentiality; reintegration of the employee into the workplace; relationship of EAP to regulatory requirements.

  2. The EAP must conduct evaluations of and document training sessions.

F. CONSULTATION WITH ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

STANDARD:
  The employee assistance program shall provide individual consultation to organization leadership regarding the management and referral to the program of employees with job performance or behavioral/medical problems.

INTENT:
  The intent of such consultation is to assure that the EAP provides support and policy-based advice to organization leadership charged with monitoring job performance and taking appropriate action in dealing with problem employees.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  1. The EAP must encourage organization leadership to consult with the EAP regarding troubled employees.

  2. The EAP must provide coaching for organization leadership on how to approach troubled employees; the use of fair, consistent intervention strategies; the use of other appropriate organization resources, documentation requirements; and the implications of labor contracts.

  3. The EAP must encourage the organization's leadership to support employees throughout the EAP service delivery process.

EXAMPLE:
- An EA professional consults with a supervisor who is concerned about coworkers' reaction to an employee's scheduled return to work following treatment.

- An EA professional consults with a union representative who is concerned about coworkers' reaction to an employee's scheduled return to work following an extended suspension.

G. ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTATION

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall provide consultation to the organization regarding issues, policies, practices and events that may impact behavior in the workplace or employee well-being.

INTENT:
The intent of this standard is to ensure that the EAP functions as an integral part of the organization and adds its unique contributions to the realization of the organization's mission and goals.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must respond promptly to requests to address organizational issues and needs.

   EXAMPLE:
   - An organization requests that the EAP train supervisors on employees' potential emotional reactions to company downsizing and how to respond to them.

2. The EAP must, whenever possible, provide input and participate in planning regarding organization issues that may impact behavior in the workplace or employee well-being.

   EXAMPLE:
   - The EAP assists the organization in developing policies to respond to potential violence in the workplace.

   - The EAP assists the organization in identifying the factors that are contributing to problematic levels of stress in the workplace.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP should take a proactive approach to minimize the impact on the organization and its employees of changes and events such as relocation, downsizing, changes in benefits, reorganization, or critical or traumatic events.

H. PROGRAM PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

STANDARD:
  The employee assistance program shall coordinate the development, availability and use of promotional materials and activities which encourage the use of the program by employees, eligible family members and organization leadership.

INTENT:
  EAP services need to be highly visible and presented in a positive light to encourage early intervention and prevention. Employee education is an essential part of program promotion and should emphasize primary prevention and self-care.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  1. The EAP must promote program services through a variety of methods, such as employee orientation programs, organization bulletin boards, web pages, literature on prevention and self-care, newsletters, and meetings with employee work groups.

      EXAMPLES:
      - An EAP designs an insert for pay envelops each quarter explaining the services and inviting employees to contact EAP.

      - An EAP conducts seminars for the employees on the types of occupational stressors common to some work environments.

  2. The EAP promotional efforts must be designed and delivered based on the unique characteristics and needs of the organization and its employee populations.

V.   DRUG FREE WORKPLACE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROFESSIONAL (SAP) SERVICES

A. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

STANDARD:
  The employee assistance program shall support the organization in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, programs and services that advocate and support a drug-free workplace.

INTENT:
  This standard is intended to emphasize the critical role EAP services play in supporting an organization's commitment to a safe, healthy, productive and drug-free workplace, even when not mandated by law or regulation.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  1. The EAP must assure that all EA professionals are knowledgeable of the regulatory and non-regulatory issues surrounding alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace and familiar with the appropriate community resources for dealing with such issues.

2. The EAP must provide consultation and education to the organization and its leadership concerning the need for and the development of policies, procedures, programs and services which address the regulatory and non-regulatory issues surrounding alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An EAP, in cooperation with human resources, legal, safety, medical, the union, and other appropriate parties, develops policies and procedures that set forth organization rules, regulations and sanctions concerning alcohol and drug use in the workplace. As a regulated organization, the policies, procedures and services are in compliance with the appropriate statutes and corresponding regulations.

3. The EAP must advocate for and assure that education and training is provided to the organization's leadership and employees concerning the issues involving alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace and their impact on performance and safety.

B. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT) REGULATIONS

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall be knowledgeable about the Department of Transportation (DOT) drug testing regulations and aware of the distinction between employee assistance professional and substance abuse professional roles.

INTENT:
Many organizations are confused about the boundaries and distinctions between EAP and SAP services. The EAP must maintain appropriate boundaries and be able to clarify the separate roles for the organization.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
2. The EAP must be knowledgeable about the DOT drug testing regulations and aware of the distinctions between the regulations of the specific governing agencies.

3. The EAP must be aware of and inform organization leadership about the distinction between the EAP and SAP roles.

C. EA PROFESSIONALS IN THE SAP ROLE

STANDARD:
The Employee assistance program shall assure that all EA professionals who perform the role of Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) are qualified to act as a SAP in accordance with the regulations (49CFR, Part 40) of the Department of Transportation.

INTENT:
For EAPs whose EA professionals also perform the SAP role, this standard is intended to clarify that the SAP role is a distinct service area with distinct governing regulations.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must establish procedures to assure that EA professionals who may perform SAP functions understand and adhere to all SAP responsibilities and activities as detailed in the applicable regulations.

2. The EAP, under which SAP activities are performed, must clarify to the organization the differences between the SAP and EAP roles and the regulations and standards applicable to each.

VI. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

A. INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall be positioned at an organizational level where it can most effectively communicate and have influence with the executive level of the organization.

INTENT:
The EAP is most useful to the organization when it is fully integrated with internal organizational activities. Close involvement and collaboration with the executive and managerial levels of the organization improves EAP visibility and increases its ability to have an impact. Partnerships within the organization maximize program effectiveness and decrease potential liabilities. Adaptations may be necessary in response to changes in organizational dynamics.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must establish working relationships with a variety of organization departments and functions, such as:

   a. Executive senior management

   b. Human resources

   c. Union

   d. Security

   e. Risk management

   f. Legal

   g. Benefits

   h. Training

   i. Safety

    j.   Organizational development

    k.   Equal employment opportunity

    l.   Employee relations

    m. Medical, Health & Wellness

    n.   Public relations & Communications

2. The EAP must promote itself as a resource to other organization functions and encourage appropriate utilization.

    EXAMPLES:
    - The EAP consults with human resources managers about problem employees and difficult supervisor situations.

    - The EAP Coordinator addresses the hospital leadership group to remind them of the EAP referral process.

    - The EAP Manager provides input to company benefits staff about health promotion, work/life programs, and benefit plan design for mental health and substance abuse.

3. The EAP must assure that all appropriate EA personnel understand or have access to the mission, relevant policies, environment, and culture of the organization.

    EXAMPLES:
    - An EAP is aware of the EEO resources within an organization and refers an employee for internal problem resolution.

    - An EAP is familiar with an organization's sick leave and disability policies and refers an employee to the appropriate department for assistance.

    - An EAP is familiar with the essential provisions of an organization's labor contracts and the union representatives' responsibilities to members. The EAP refers a union member to her union representative for support.

4. The EAP must establish appropriate boundaries within the organization to protect EAP neutrality, define the EAP role, and facilitate teamwork.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An EAP clarifies its relationship with the organization physician regarding confidentiality, consultation responsibilities and authority for case management.

5. The EAP must promote case finding activities throughout the organization to encourage appropriate and early referral to the EAP.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An EAP consults with the Employee Relations Department in drafting a statement advocating referral to the EAP in conjunction with all written notices of

administrative or disciplinary action. Referral to the EAP also is suggested routinely to employees in at least the following situations:

a. Employees on long term disability

b. Victims of sexual harassment

c. Employees who have been disciplined for harassment

d. Employees receiving an unsatisfactory job appraisal

e. Employees involved in critical incidents

B. MANAGED CARE SYSTEMS

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall collaborate with all healthcare systems that provide services to the organization, including managed behavioral healthcare (MBHC), disease management, and disability management systems, to establish and define the relationship between the employee assistance program and those systems.

INTENT:
The differences in roles and responsibilities between EAPs and managed healthcare systems must be clearly delineated and distinguished for the organization and the employees. The primary focus of the EAP, even in an integrated model, is the relationship between the EAP and the workplace.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must strive to establish and maintain a constructive working relationship with all healthcare systems serving the organization to facilitate employees' ability to access needed treatment resources.

2. The EAP must assist the organization in defining the distinction between EAP roles and responsibilities and MBHC roles and responsibilities and must assist in communicating that information to employees and organization leadership

3. The EAP must consult with the organization regarding the planning, implementation and maintenance of MBHC and other healthcare and disability benefits.

4. The EAP must serve as a key resource for consultation to the managed healthcare systems and the organization on such issues as reintegration to the workplace following treatment, reasonable accommodation for behavioral heath problems, and follow-up of job performance based referrals.

5. The EAP must maintain a working knowledge of the provider networks of all MBHCs serving the organization and its employees.

C. WORK/LIFE, HEALTH PROMOTION, AND RELATED SERVICES

STANDARD:
  The employee assistance program shall collaborate with work/life, health promotion, and other related services to establish and define the relationship between the employee assistance program and those systems.

INTENT:
  The differences in roles and responsibilities between EAPs and other services to employees and the organization must be clearly defined and communicated to foster full use of available services by all eligible parties.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  1. The EAP must strive to establish and maintain a constructive working relationship with all other related services within the organization.

  2. The EAP must assist the organization in defining the distinction between EAP roles and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of related services and must assist in communicating that information to employees and organization leadership.

D. EXTERNAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES

STANDARD:
  The employee assistance program shall identify and utilize those healthcare and other community resources that provide quality assistance to employees, eligible family members and the organization.

INTENT:
  Delivery of quality services responsive to the needs of the employees, eligible family members and the organization requires that the EAP develop and maintain constructive working relationships with appropriate external resources.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
  1. The EAP must consult with primary care physicians and other gatekeepers to assure timely and appropriate employee access to healthcare services.

  2. The EAP must identify, evaluate, and select potential resources, using criteria such as:

      a. Availability

      b. Confidentiality

      c. Willingness to coordinate with EAP

    d. Services offered

    e. Accessibility

    f. Geographic location

    g. Knowledge of work environments

    h. Professional qualifications

    i. Responsiveness

    j. Cost and payment systems

    k. Protection of client rights

    l. Coverage under insurance or managed care plan

EXAMPLES:
- An EA professional consults with her peer network and other reliable professional sources for references and recommendations regarding community resources.

- An EAP disseminates a written questionnaire to potential resource providers based on comprehensive predetermined criteria.

3. The EAP must act as an advocate for employees in accessing needed treatment resources.

4. The EAP must maintain direct and regular contact with appropriate health care providers and community resources.

EXAMPLES:
- An EAP periodically visits area service providers to gather current information about facilities, types of services, staff or affiliates and provider quality assurance.

- An EAP conducts phone calls with private practitioners on either an individual or conference call basis to assess such factors as personal presentation and knowledge of specialty areas.

- An EAP attends open meetings of self-help groups and visits community recovery centers and fellowships.

- An EAP conducts regular webinars for providers to deliver orientation, training, and opportunities for discussion.

5. The EAP must develop mechanisms which facilitate ease in the matching of client needs and provider capabilities.

EXAMPLE:
- An EAP implements an information system that provides comprehensive data on the special areas of need that service providers are capable of addressing such as ethnic issues, language, gender identity, codependency and sexual abuse.

E.   EXTERNAL AGENCIES

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall maintain awareness of the activities of external bodies which may impact the employee assistance program. External bodies include regulatory agencies, legislatures, courts, advocacy groups, professional associations, business groups and academic centers.

INTENT:
By keeping abreast of the implications of regulations, legislation, economic and business trends and other emerging issues, EA professionals can take a proactive stance when EAP activities and employee well-being may be affected.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:
1. The EAP must identify external bodies which may impact EAP activities.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An EA professional in an organization with safely sensitive positions (e.g., nuclear workers) identifies the regulatory agencies which have oversight responsibilities and familiarizes himself with their requirements.

2. The EAP must arrange for the effective collection of accurate information from relevant external bodies.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An EAP professional establishes a means of being informed when court decisions or arbitrations change case law in areas such as: harassment, discrimination and accommodation of persons with disabilities.

3. The EAP must provide consultation to the organization regarding compliance with EAP related laws and regulations.

    EXAMPLE:
    - An EAP provides consultation to an organization regarding Drug-Free Workplace requirements and Department of Transportation drug testing regulations.

VII. EVALUATION

STANDARD:
The employee assistance program shall evaluate the appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency of its services and operations. Measurable objectives shall be stated for both program processes and outcomes.

INTENT:

Meaningful evaluation of an EAP depends on having measurable program objectives and data collection mechanisms. These should be developed early in a program's planning process. In addition to guiding the implementation and operations of the EAP, measurable objectives allow the organization to judge the program's progress and usefulness and to identify the need for program modifications. The procedures for achieving each objective should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the objectives are achievable. Data that measure program effectiveness should be gathered routinely and analyzed to evaluate progress toward each objective.

A review of the activities or utilization of the program does not necessarily measure or evaluate its impact on the organization and the effectiveness with which it fulfills its mandate. Therefore, a well-run EAP continually reassesses EA services with respect to the needs of the organization and adjusts EAP objectives accordingly.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must develop a written evaluation plan which includes at least the following:

    a. A statement of the program's goals and objectives

    b. Description of the evaluation methodologies that will be used to determine if the program has met its goals and objectives. Methodology should be generally accepted, valid, and reliable.

    c. A plan of action, including a timetable, for completing the evaluation.

2. The EAP must conduct the evaluation at least annually in accordance with the evaluation plan.

3. The EAP must review and update the evaluation plan at least every two years.

4. As part of the ongoing evaluation, the EAP must collect data on all program components and services.

5. The evaluation process must include mechanisms to obtain stakeholder feedback about the program, its services, and organization and employee support for its goals and objectives.

    EXAMPLES:
    - With participant consent, the EAP conducts satisfaction and outcome surveys of program services.

    - The EAP conducts a survey of the organization's leadership regarding the effectiveness of EA services

    - The EAP solicits feedback from EA network providers regarding their experience interacting with the EAP.

6. The EAP must develop a mechanism to incorporate the results of all program evaluation efforts into a continuous improvement process.

    EXAMPLE:
    • An EAP produces and distributes a report of the results of the evaluation annually. The report includes:

    a) A summary of the year's goals and objectives for the program

    b) A description of the evaluation methods used during the year

    c) Results of the evaluations

    d) A follow-up plan of action based on the evaluation results, including specific steps to be taken to enhance program processes and outcomes

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS
1. The EAP should build in an evaluation component to measure the impact of the program on work and cost indicators, including:

    a. Health care claims and costs

    b. Disability claims and costs

    c. Absenteeism

    d. Accidents and injuries

    e. Workers' Compensation claims

    f. Job performance and productivity

EAPA gratefully acknowledges the members of the 2009-2010 Standards Task Force for their valuable contribution to the Association and the EA profession:

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